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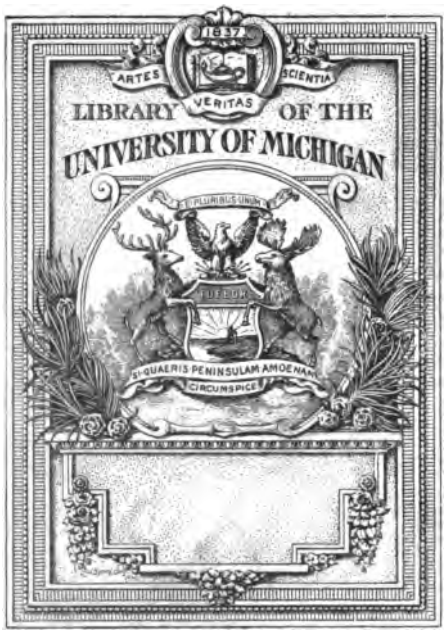
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THE

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MINISTRY OF LOVE

BY
IRENE ABBOTT

TOPEKA, KANSAS
CRANE & COMPANY, PRINTERS
1903

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To my Daughter.

PREFACE.

In sending forth my little volume on its "Ministry of Love," I can but hope that many of the verses will fulfill their mission.

I have written my book for that great "middle class" among whom I labor (having consecrated my life to the rescue work), and whom I love. I know, too, that these have little time or opportunity for literary study. To the average man and woman, life is a time of labor, with but little rest, and it is a boon that is fast slipping away from all.

I therefore think that they to whom I send my book will say with one who wrote many years ago: "What if the gold be wrapped up in ore? None throw away the apple for the core," and will by my

simple song be led nearer to Him whose love is so precious to mortal man.

When, three years ago, I published my first little volume of verse, "Lyrics of the West," it was well received, and many of the critics spoke more kindly than I felt the work merited. Some, however, gave evidence of having read hastily, so that the meaning of my song was overlooked while the errors were plainly seen.

I ask of those who read this little volume, will you not "come hither, and lay my book, thy head, and heart together"?

I know that errors exist in the book, and very many of them, too, but I am powerless to write as I would. I will say this, that I have not sought the literary life,—it is forever beyond my reach; but the things I write, sing in my heart until I must give expression to them.

If it should be that any heart would be softer, and cleaner, and better, after my song, I shall be satisfied.

IRENE McMILLAN-ABBOTT.

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THE MINISTRY OF LOVE.

'T was summer! Many wandered to and fro,
In quest of some cool breeze, and it was so
With my friend Dean and me. We sought the park,
Where glinted sunbeams parted shadows dark,
And butterflies played hide-and-seek; and there,
Where Nature smiles her sweetest everywhere,
We sat us down to pass the time away
In comradeship and peace, as friendship may.
Dean was a bright young theologue, and I
Saw naught but happiness in his bright eye,—
Dreamed not that he had brought me there to tell
A story of his past, that seemed so well,
Yet was, withal, the saddest ever told.

Than he no gentler soul I e'er have known.
The light of honesty in blue eyes shone

Like stars in azure sky; his voice was low,
Like some sweet fancied melody. I know
He ne'er had spoken harshly, nor unkind,
For perfect was the culture of his mind,
And all his soul was written o'er with love,
As this the tale I have to tell will prove.

He could not make a pure young girl his wife,
Until she knew the story of his life;
He would not whisper of his love, he said,
Until I all should know. And then he led
The conversation from his boyhood days,
His mother, idolized, her charming ways,
To student life, and his ambitions great,—
(Ah, God! how merciless the ways of fate!)
And there he stopped, choked back the sobs, and ere
He spoke again, I saw him bowed in prayer.

He raised his face; I could not look at it,
Such dreadful shadows I saw o'er it flit.
I looked away, then he began: "At home
I loved a little girl; to overcome
This passion (for she was too young to wed),
To college father sent me; but she said

The precious words that promised, ere I went,
She 'd be my wife when college days were spent.
Time flitted by, days lengthened into years;
I knew naught of my idol's joys or tears.
I only knew she 'd promised to be mine,
She who was in my thought almost divine.
At length school-days were finished; I once more
Stood waiting at my little sweetheart's door."

He ceased to speak. God grant I ne'er shall see
So strong a man so sorrowful as he.
He struggled as in death sometimes men do;
I pitied him; my God, I suffered too.
And in my heart I said, I 'll be his wife
Whate'er the sin that darkens thus his life.
Well, brokenly, between great sobs, he told
How one had sought his darling, had made bold
To her entice from virtue's path, and when
He tired, left her. She, accurs'd of men,
Sought out the refuge of the house of her
"Whose steps take hold on hell."

And when he knew
That she had thus been false, thus base, untrue,

He could not curse her memory, but went
Thro' months and years in search of her. A rent
In some old curtain where he passed one day
Gave him the sight of her. She knew him, aye,
And yearned for him as in the dark of night,
A child that wakes in fright, yearns for the light.

He found for her a quiet, peaceful nook,
And ne'er reproached her, even by a look
That might accuse her; yet, he could not wed,
Because the little girl he loved was dead;
But he would save her from a future worse
Than ever man has known beneath sin's curse.
For oh, a woman's purity is God
Enthroned within her being! and the rod
Of men, and demons, too, will lash the back
Of her who falters on this shining track.
Would save her — save her e'en against her will,
Would help this frail young girl pure life to live,
By dealing with her tenderly, until
He needed not to say, "Dear, I forgive."

One day a message called him from the town.
He sent to tell her, saying, "I 'll return

And not be long away." By none 't was known
That he thus sheltered her whom others mourn.
And she had no communication then,
With anyone within the world of men.
Illiterate and old the people were,
Who in their tenderness so shielded her,
And tho' the little cottage by the lake
Was pleasant, all the night she 'd lie awake,
And listen for the step that did not come,
Until her waiting heart was stricken dumb.
For sometime, during every dreary day,
He came, and did not fail her; now she lay
With sleepless eyes, and counted o'er the while
He had not come to cheer her with his smile.

And tho' the days had formed of weeks but two,
Since his departure, seemed her poor heart knew
That he was growing weary of his charge,
And sought the pleasures of the world at large,
Thus leaving her to loneliness; and yet,
One moment he did not his charge forget.
This truth she could not know. He would return
At once, he said, and she the truth should learn
Of all that had detained him; he would go

Straight to her little dwelling; he would throw
Himself down at her feet, as in the past;
Would ask her to become his wife. At last
He loved her with a love that could forget,
Tho' it would live fore'er beside regret.

But wait! a telegram! It simply said,
"The little girl you left with us is dead;
She took her life at ten on yesterday.
O God! I fear she knew not how to pray."

I cannot tell what happened after that.
Dean ceased to speak; for many moments sat
In tearful meditation. Suddenly
He raised his head and sadly looked at me.
"Oh, Natalie!" he whispered, "now my sin,
The story of my downfall must begin.
'T is hard to tell, oh, God, so hard to tell!
I loved my little chum, God knows how well!
And fear she took her life because she thought
Herself a burden on my life; and naught
Could cheer her days she knew if I should be,
Thro' all the coming years, away. Well, she
When first I found her (oh, poor little heart!)

Was trying to endure the fearful part
Her awful life entailed, by drowning thought
(Poor child — unconsciousness was dearly bought)
With morphine; this she told me oft relieved
The sorrows of her heart, and I believed
It might be bless'd to those who suffer pain
From all such subtle torture of the brain.
So, like a giant oak that has been felled,
I lay in awful agony; life held
No promise and no hope when Florence died!
O God! man that I am, I only cried
Like some weak child for many days; and then,
Remembered was the morphine! Ah, and when
I once had learned that I could thus drown sorrow,
I sunk it out of sight on every morrow.
I sunk into the depths of sin and shame,
I brought disgrace on my old father's name!
I sunk a fortune in a few short years,
I broke my mother's heart! Her prayers, her tears,
Availed not. Oh, my mother, you forgave,
But my sin laid you in that early grave!
The demons held me body, spirit, soul!
The fiends of hell sought for complete control

And I had died of sin, and vice, and woe,
The deepest ever mortal man can know,
If in my hour of direst need, our God
Had sought me not. I suffered 'neath the rod
My sin laid on me. Oh, for many days
When first I tried to conquer all, a phase
Of Satan's wiles unknown to me I learned.
O God! I thirsted, hungered, pleaded, yearned,
Was all but dead with pain for want of that,
The drug that cursed my life; then I lay flat
Upon my chamber floor and wished for death
With every faintly passing, tortured breath;
Until I heard the gentle voice and low,
Of Him who gave his life on Calvary's brow,
That such a wretch as I might rise and live.
I pleaded, 'For His sake, O God, forgive.'
And answer came: ''T is done!'

"Oh, Natalie,
God saves me from myself! And I would be
On fire with zeal for holy ministry.
Wilt thou, dear heart, join me in song and prayer
Where men are lost in darkness and despair?
Together shall we snatch men as a brand

From out the burning?" Softly then his hand
Fell on my head. I turned to see his face;
We both knelt down and thanked God for his
grace.
And then, I think, God's angels heard me say,
"Dean, I will help you live, and love, and pray."

BLESS GOD FOR DREAMS.

WHENCE cometh dreams? Oh, that we could at will,
Dream o'er and o'er again some pleasant dream;
We would embrace with happiness, I deem,
Those hours when all is darkness, all is still.
How blest it is in dreamland paths to stray,
With those we love, far from the world away.

Last night — I lay me down to sleep — there came
In visions of the night, my babe to me;
And oh, his smiling eyes I seemed to see,
His gentle voice seemed e'en to speak my name.
And then, while there I lay in slumbrous rest,
I dreamed I held my babe upon my breast.

I wakened! and the dream had been so sweet,
It made the sunlight brighter at the dawn!
Where is my little one? Where has he gone,
That in my waking hours we cannot meet?

Yet, when I sleep I feel his lips touch mine,
And see the love-light in his bright eyes shine.

Bless God—bless God for dreams. I love the night
Far better than the thronged and busy day;
At eve'ntide we near our God to pray,
And angels visit us in visions bright.
Oh, little one, my baby boy, return;
As in the night you came,—I less shall mourn!

THERE IS BUT ONE.

A score of times the human heart may love,
And just as oft forget; and yet I feel
That soul which faithful is to some ideal
Shall find its mate—God's love and blessing prove.
There is but one whose soul could blend with mine,
And soar away to God on wings divine.
There is but one.

There is but one—
But one whose fingers sweep the voiceless keys,
And wake the strains resounded at God's throne!
The angels stoop to listen, and they own
The touch that speaks the Master's work; and these
Bright beings clothed in light, bend low and smile;
They listen, wait, and softly say the while,
"There is but one."

HOPE.

WHAT meaneth these strange visions of my dreams?
I would know why in sadness oft I feel
A momentary gladness o'er me steal
Like thro' the clouds I've seen the sunlight's gleams.
Whence cometh joy which like a promise seems,
This faint sweet thrill which seemeth to reveal
Some future good the present would conceal?
I know not; it may be that fairer themes
Have been the burden of another's song,
But this to me is sweetest, dearest, best,
While blindly in the darkness I must grope,
While o'er my life the clouds hang thick; and long
I've put away my pain, to greet this guest,
Whom angels sent, and men have christened Hope.

MY SWEETHEART

My sweetheart, we must say good-by,
And for a time be parted; aye,
Before to-morrow at this hour,
You will have left love's sacred bower,
And I shall lonely be: but why
Should tears unbidden start? On high
One dwells who loves thee well: I cry
To Him to guide from Heaven's tower,
My sweetheart.

My cry is heard, and angels fly
From Heaven to thy side; and nigh
Thee, in thy every waking hour,
They 'll save thee from the tempter's power:
So kiss me now, and say good-by,
My sweetheart.

"YET WILL I NOT FORGET THEE."

ALONE I seemed to be amid earth's strife;
Alone, and sorrow's night o'ershadowed me;
No heart seemed true, yet oh, I longed to be
Both loved and comforted; my soul was rife
With yearnings for a nobler, better life
Than I had known; I struggled to be free
From life's vexations born of vanity,—
And in my heart a friend had plunged a knife,
Or spoken words more cutting; and it seemed
Naught but despair life held. My heart was torn,
My soul was like a caged thing, frantic, wild,
And not a ray of light upon me gleamed.
Then spoke my Lord: "Thou may'st be forlorn,
Yet will I not forget thee, O my child!"

TO A PICTURE.

Solitude is mine; night closes
All mankind in her embrace,
And ere I invoke her slumbers,
I would look upon thy face.
In the silence of my chamber
Here I find my sweetest joy,
Gazing on thee, precious picture,
Of my dead, my crippled boy.

Oh, my treasure! None would prize thee,
But would marvel at thy scars;
So no eye shall rest upon thee,
None save mine; for nothing mars
In thy mother's sight thy beauty,
Little darling, treasure mine,
Beautiful thy face is ever,
Love shines in those eyes of thine.

How we loved, great God, thou knowest,
And how hard it was to part;

How his tender eyes the message
  Gave that burned within his heart.
I bent over him to catch his
  Dying words, so precious, sweet:
"Mamma, dear, I'll not be crippled
  When in heaven again we meet."

Then he smiled, and all was over.
  Darling! darling! Oh, my God!
Can I bear this life so lonely
  While you sleep beneath the sod?
And I want you, darling; want you!
  But no, no; you'd suffer pain:
I can go to you; you cannot
  Come to earth to me again.

Oh, dear pictured eyes, I thank thee
  For thy message to my heart,
And I kneel and pray before thee
  That sin from my soul depart.
Now, dear pictured face, I kiss you,
  And good-night, good-night, good-night.
I'll return to thee, oh, dear one,
  At the dawning of the light.

DIVORCED.

I.

"Since we were wed, I've been like some wee
child,
Obedient to your slightest wish; have been
Denied the right to come and go at will,
As tho' you were my master, I your slave.
I've wanted much that I have been denied,
Which you could well have given; and I know
Our children are more shabby in their dress
Than are the neighbors' children. And then, too,
You 're ofttimes cross and crabbed as a bear,
And now have added this sin to the rest,
Of acting in a way improper, quite,
To say the least, with Lucille DeL. Orme.
I shall be free! No longer will I kneel
To one unworthy of me. It is well
The laws of this our country are so just,
And I shall have our marriage set aside,
That you may wed your beautiful Lucille."

II.

ALONE.

"The day is sultry, and my head is wild!
I think I'll rest upon the sofa here,
And it may be that I shall fall asleep,
And get new courage for my awful task.
I'll call for an attorney ere the night
Comes on, for I am outraged! Ah, I saw
My husband softly talking to that girl
When neither knew I saw it. It is right
That I should not endure it longer; though
I love him! God, 't will kill me, this I know,
To leave him it will kill me! But I feel
That I am right, and that it must be so."

III.

REST.

She lay down on her couch, her thoughts ran wild!
And, planning separation, fell asleep,
While near her plays her youngest, fairest child,
Whose feet ere long will wade thro' waters deep.
The sun is sinking in the golden west,
The mother sweetly sleeps, and baby, too,

Has wandered to the land of dreams, and rest;
There by her mother's cot lies "little Lou."

IV.

DIVORCED.

"Three years have quickly flown since I became
Divorced! Oh, had I reckoned all the cost,
Would I have sought my freedom? God, who knows?
But I believe I'd ne'er have done it. List!
My children are heartbroken in their youth,
From father, or from mother, torn apart;
And on their faces age is written ere
The years creep on. Then, too, they suffer shame
From which I might have shielded them, and should.
Had I had cause more just, I'd not regret
The step I've taken. Had my husband failed
In faithfulness to vows he made when God
United us, my soul could not condemn
My course, for God Himself would sanction it.
But courts are lax, and any trivial cause
Suffices to put man and wife apart.

The children suffer! for they, loving each,
Feel evermore a dagger in the heart.
Last night my son lay on his couch and wept.
I sought to comfort him; convulsed with sobs
He whispered in my ear: "Oh, mother, cease!
I weep because we ne'er can be again
Together all one family." Oh, boy,
You've stabbed my heart forever,— God forgive,
That I have wronged my children for a thing
I fancied was an insult to myself.
Unselfish? Ah, more selfish could I be?
Yet what had I to gain? My little Lou
Is pining for her mother far away;
Her father keeps her from me. Oh, dear God,
To feel her rosy lips on mine, to see
The love-light in those melting big brown eyes
To hold her to my bosom, nevermore
To dwell apart from me, O God, my God!
I cannot longer bear this pain! Oh, give
My daughter to my arms again. Come — come!
My brown-eyed darling, to your mother's heart!"

V.

A DREAM.

"Sweet mamma, does 'oo want me? Here I is!"
And little Lou climbed to her mother's breast.
"A dream! a dream!" she cried. "The way is His,
The way of Him our God, to ply this test.
Thank God, it was a dream! Oh, little Lou,
One family we are, shall ever be;
For he is not unfaithful, nor untrue,
Your father, tho' I thought unjust to me."

VI.

AT TWILIGHT.

The evening shadows fall, the day is done.
A step is heard upon the gravel walk,
A step well known, and much beloved. Ah, look!
The husband comes! The wife goes forth to meet
And greet him, and he, wondering, is glad,
But cannot understand, 'til, by-and-by,
When all the bairns were snugly tucked in bed,
She drew her chair beside him, shyly said:

"Dear heart, at noon I spoiled our marital bliss,—
To-night I 'd be forgiven with a kiss."
But from her lips one word will ne'er be forced,
Of how she dreamed they two had been divorced.

CONFESSION.

I WRITE not for the critics
  Who may my verses see,
But for the sister, brother,
  Who may have need of me.
I sing to warn the wayward
  Of danger; and to lend
A helping hand where'er I may,
  To stranger, brother, friend.

Oh, I 've a heart of pity
  And tenderness, indeed,
For every suffering creature,
  For every one in need
Of sympathy; I 'd shelter
  And give the weary rest;
I 'd kneel beside the erring soul,
  And fold him to my breast.

Ah, thou hast sinned; but dreamest
  Thou this, my friend, that I

Have waded not those waters?
  Else were my sympathy
A freezing thing to chill thee!
  As water, not as blood!
But I have sinned, and been forgiv'n
  And learned me to be good.

Hast thou been in the conflict
  With him they name Regret?
And hast thou wounds received whose scars
  Forbid thee to forget?
Aye, have I not lain silent
  Beneath his scourging rod,
Nor dared to speak save in my heart
  To cry: "O God, O God!"

Yes, weeping I 'll weep with thee,
  And with thee, too, rejoice,
Whoe'er thou art that lovest,
  For I have heard love's voice.
My heart is like the springtime,
  Whate'er of pain I know,
For love and I go hand in hand,
  Where'er I needs must go.

So I 'd not ask the critics
To praise my simple lines,
But much I hope that in them
God's love and mercy shines.
For I have tasted sorrow,
Aye, much more happiness;
But they alone who have known pain,
Can love, and guide, and bless.

TAKE TIME TO BE KIND.

Take time to be kind!
Oh, the pain-pierced heart
Of a man you may meet
May be guiding his feet
Where the doomed shall depart.
Take time to be kind!

Take time to be kind!
And condemn not, I pray.
Turn the lost to the light
Of God's countenance bright —
Gently guide feet that stray,
Until God's paths they find.

Take time to be kind!
Every man is thy brother!
Then to-day — not to-morrow —
Lighten some load of sorrow,
Lend thine hand to another.
Take time to be kind!

Take time to be kind!
And God's mercy thou 'lt prove.
Stoop to all who go wrong,
Sing the erring a song,
Full of pitying love.
Take time to be kind!

Take time to be kind!
For we hurry away,
And oh, death's night will come,
When the tongue shall be dumb.
Precious brother, to-day
Take time to be kind!

A FADED ROSE.

A FADED rose, 't is all thou art;
And yet thou speakest to my heart,
  And what thou sayest none may hear
  Save me alone, and oft a tear
Is in mine eye — we could but part.

Thou gavest me this rose, sweetheart;
I wore it on my breast. Impart
Peace to my soul, oh, treasure dear,
  A faded rose.

A crumpled rose, yet it doth start
Infinite longings, and the smart
  Of pain it gives; but pain were cheer,
  For love is true, tho' far or near;
And so I bless, I prize, sweetheart,
  A faded rose.

SOME DAY.

Some day, when life on earth is o'er,
(It may be ere another dawn,)
I 'll stand before Heaven's open door,
And wait to hear the words, "Pass on."
And I shall be with God! My soul,
Canst thou not forward look to this,
And onward press thee to the goal,
The rich reward in realms of bliss?

Yes, yes! the Father loves His child!
And tho' I wade the waters deep,
Am all but conquered by the wild
Fierce longing in my soul, I 'd keep
Low at my Saviour's feet, that I
One precious lesson shall not miss;
When all are learned, then by-and-by
I shall receive my Saviour's kiss,

And then be folded to His breast,
Oh, I am sure of this embrace,

When I have borne each fiery test,
And shall behold my Saviour's face.
Some day, O soul, I know not when,
But loved ones wait me there who trod
The way with bleeding feet. Amen.
I, too, e'er long shall be with God.

ANSWERED.

My friend, I trust that you are wrong
In thinking that you love me.
I cannot wed with you, but list!
I 'll pray the God above me,
To bless your life, and make it glad.
I would not blight with sorrow,
That heart that honors me with trust,
But hope you must not borrow.

You thought I loved you? Well, 'tis true!
Know this: I 've not deceived you!
You were the idol of my heart,
And, Arthur, if I 've grieved you,
'T is that it must be so,—we part.
You need not ask the reason,
But say good-by; the heart is dead
That gave you love's sweet season.

You will not go until you know
Why thus I have refused you?
Well, if my silence makes you feel
That I 've unkindly used you,

You shall know all. O, if 't were false,
That thing that has been told me,
I 'd bid you take me in your arms,
And to your heart enfold me.

You seem so noble, good, and true!
Sit down right here beside me.
It may be false, but oh, my God,
The awful thing has tried me
Beyond my strength; and if a lie
Has burned into my heart, love,
Your pardon I implore, that I
Have doubted you in part, love.

It is not true! They say that you
Led from the path of virtue,
A very child in years, and that
She loved you — oh, I 've hurt you!
You 're white as death. I knew the lie
Would stab you. Look, O Arthur,
Right in my eyes; I 'll read your soul,
And need not tell you farther.

My God! why do you turn away?
The averted eye, what means it?

'T is true! 't is true! I know it now,
My love no longer screens it.
And that wee child with nameless babe,
Is cursed with shame forever.
Oh, now once more I say the truth —
Our paths in life must sever.

You are not now the man I loved!
Your heart, it must be leaden,
That you could woo me for your wife,
And thus your conscience deaden,
While she who loved and trusted you
Lies crushed beneath her burden,
And your own helpless little one
Has deathless shame her guerdon.

Before you go, I 've one more thing
To ask you: would you marry
A girl that had thus sinned? Ah, no!
You need not longer tarry.
I loved you once, pray for you now,
But wed with you — no, never!
My lover must be pure and true.
Go now — good-by — forever.

MY MISSION.

[The following lines contain incidents that are truth, and not fiction. The poem is, in embryo, the story of my life.—THE AUTHOR.]

LIFE is a gift, and for a purpose given.
No life need be a failure, if the soul
Seeks well to know the mission on which sent,
And joyfully surrenders to the plan
Prepared by the All-wise One, for that life.
I sought to find my mission. As I went,
My way led into shadow. Lo! the night
O'ertook me, and the heavens grew so dark
That I became quite lost thro' winding paths,
That e'er where'er I went my feet misled.
To speak (and so that all may understand),
I this confession make; and if it seem
That I have torn the veil from off my heart
That all the gaping crowd may look therein,
I trust I shall be pardoned, for I lay
Within that heart all mankind as my brother;

And it may be the thing my soul has learned
Will guide some other trav'ler on life's road.

I have known sorrow! I have sipped the dregs
From many a bitter cup; have felt the sting
Of disappointment, and of hopes laid low,
And in the dark of night, when none could see
Save God, I've wept, and prayed thro' weary hours.
I've companied with pain, and if it be
Some scars are on my heart I'd not unveil,
'T is that no one save He who formed that heart
Can ope the door and be a welcome guest,
In that deep, untold anguish of my soul.

Now thro' the years as I have sought to find
My life-work, (for in childhood days there came
A fancy to my brain that I was born
To serve my fellow-being,) I have felt
That somehow cause of suffering, and pain,
And wandering astray from God, I'd lost
The way wherein it was ordained my feet
Should go; and that to reach yon dizzy heights
To which my soul aspired, I'd need to be
Taught in a different school in life.

But wait!
One night there rose within a city church,
To tell the people of the love of God,
A white-haired man full sixty summers old,
But whose fair face was like a dream of joy,
So rosy, and so full of sweet content.
He spoke, and at the magic of his voice
Ten thousand earth-bound souls were given wings,
And soared with him beyond time's borders, where
The saints of God bask in eternity.
And when he laughed, each heart in all the throng
Re-echoed laughter, for each soul was glad.

At length I heard him tell that never sorrow
Had touched him, nor had sickness brushed her wing
Across his fair, smooth brow.

He lauded life,
And said it had to him been sweet to live.
All earthly blessings God had deigned to lay
Low at his feet.

Quick as a flash there came
A burning question to my troubled heart.
There rose before me, like unnumbered ghosts,

The wrongs my life has suffered; all my tears
And yearnings of my soul fore'er denied
Fruition.

And the chastisement my life
Has undergone seemed bitter to my soul,
In that hour when another smiling told
Of freedom from all pain, and of life's bliss,
Which ever had enveloped him. I asked:
"Why is one life thus favored, one thus sad,
One free from pain, another pierced thro'?"
In one fair life all dreams come true, the other
Is chased by disappointment aye and ever.

The answer came, I cannot say just how,
But ere the shadows of another day
Had vanished into night, I chanced to meet
Upon a dismal sin-cursed city street,
Where I had gone to seek one in distress
And want, and carry food and clothing, one
Whose face was like the dead; and from whose
lips
There dropped the bright red blood, and in whose
I saw the story of a sin-wrecked life, [eye

And knew that death was hard upon her track,
That shame was all her heritage: her soul
Was soon to leap into the awful dark
Where lost souls gnash their teeth in agony.

She glanced into my face; I took her hand,
And said, in tones of love, while to my eyes
Sprang tears of pity, "Little girl, I pray
Give me the chance to say to you some words
I find it in my heart to speak." She stood,
And like a hunted animal she crept
A little nearer to me, for she felt
The love that burned like lava in my heart
And sent its flames into my face and eyes.

I learned her piteous story. "Come with me,"
I said, "and I will give you food and rest."
And as she wept (poor lost one!), I crept close
And touched my lips to her fair cheek and brow.

She started! Cried, "Don't touch me!" Then she said,
"No woman's lips have kissed me since the day
My mother kissed me last." But in that hour

She knelt before a wronged and loving God,
And peace and pardon sought.

That night she died.
And I my mission found! 'T is not to sing,
But reach my arms out o'er the waves that God
May put within them human wrecks that float
Upon the sea of life. 'T is not to laugh —
Oh, no! my heart is sad! — but 't is to go
Where sin has cursed and blighted, where no ray
Of sunlight from God's throne has e'er been felt,
And by my knowledge of all human pain,
A great physician be to hearts that ache.

The soul that has not supped with pain may be
In this world's darkness like the fragrant rose,
Exhaling perfume on life's battlefield,
Where dead and dying lie in loneliness,
And the sweet perfume cometh like a kiss.
But oh, that life pain, pierced and torture-torn,
Is like the healing herb that deadens pain,
Restores the ill, and dries up every wound.

Such is my mission! And my life has been —
I see it now — in training from my birth.

God's love hath ordered every path I 've trod,
And I draw nearer to Him as I see
The human wrecks about me, and I feel
My soul go out in sympathy, and yearn
To rest some aching head upon my breast.
Great is God's plan! and may He be my guide;
This only would I ask. I love His will.
And tho' we love the seasons of the flowers
Far better than old winter's piercing blasts,
And tho' the heart loves pleasure-laden hours
And shrinks from sorrow, weariness and care,
I 'll seek the flowers that bloom to deathless be,
And wait for pleasures where no sin is known.
If only I may be, while waiting here,
An instrument meet for the Master's use,
I 'll kiss the hand that deals me needful pain,
And love my mission but next to my God.

THE LAND WHERE DREAMS COME TRUE.

THERE 's a land where deathless flowers
  Breathe their fragrance on the air,
And the little wounded song-bird
  Lives again more glad and fair.
There the stormclouds do not lower,
  For the sky is ever blue;
'T is the place where lovers linger,
  And the land where dreams come true.

There the minstrels songs are singing
  That were left to us unsung,
And the marriage-bells are ringing
  That on earth were never rung.
There the jewels flash and sparkle
  For the many, not the few,
And there 's ne'er a wind a-sighing
  In the land where dreams come true.

I have seen a little maiden
  Fix her gaze upon the stars,

Then I 've seen her, unsuspecting,
  Turn and grasp the sin that mars.
And the years roll on in sadness,
  And the sky has lost its blue —
Little maiden, stars are shining
  In the land where dreams come true.

Thus we all have seen the shadow,
  And we long for light of day;
Oh, the flowers quickly wither
  That are blooming by the way.
There are voices gently calling,
  Where the music 's ever new,
And there 's ne'er a note of sadness
  In the land where dreams come true.

We are waiting — worn and weary,
  By the river deep and wide,
For the coming of the boatman
  Who shall take us all a ride.
Ah, we 'll sing as we go sailing
  O'er the laughing waters blue,
To the land of blooming flowers,
  And the land where dreams come true.

THE BABY'S MESSAGE.

THE house was neat, and cozy,
Wherein the baby dwelt,
Whose father was an engineer,
Upon the "Cotton Belt."
And near the fence the railroad
Stretched in a shining line,
Afar beyond the hills, and thro'
The hemlock trees and pine.

He was a fair-haired darling,
With laughing bright blue eyes,
And to his father's heart more dear
Than any earthly prize.
He 'd kiss him every morning,
And toss him up so high,
And say: "Now watch for papa's train —
'T will soon be going by."

The fence had lost a picket,
And ever when 't was light
The child stood peering thro' the space,
Until there came in sight

His father's shining engine.
  His train he 'd never miss,
And, peering thro' the broken fence,
  He 'd waft a tiny kiss.

The engineer would catch it,
  And smile upon his boy;
Then all the long and busy day
  His heart o'erflowed with joy.
And when he was returning,
  He 'd yearn to reach the place,
Where, peeping thro' the picket fence,
  He 'd see the little face.

One day the engine whistled;
  The engineer looked out,
But not a tiny blue-eyed boy
  Was anywhere about.
His heart was filled with sadness
  All thro' the day; and fear
Caused hard and fast his heart to beat
  As homeward he drew near.

He hastened thro' the gateway,
  He opened quick the door,

And cried, "Oh, papa's little pard,
Where are you?" Then before
One word had e'er been spoken,
He saw the tiny bed,
And lying on it there he knew
His baby boy lay dead.

The stricken wife and mother
Knelt at her husband's side,
And whispered: "He a message left,
Dear heart, before he died.
He felt you'd miss forever
His little good-by kiss,
And all his thought, love, was of you;
His message dear, was this:

"'Tell papa, when you see him,
To not cry very hard
Because I'm gone, for up in heaven
He'll see his little pard.
And tell him I'll be waiting,
At heaven's fence, just where
The picket's off; kiss him good-by;
I'll watch — for papa — there.'"

LOVE'S YEARNING.

If it were mine to gather in my hands unfading flowers;
If it were mine to sing in sweeter tones than mortals sing;
If I could drink of every joy, and stay the fleeting hours;
If I could change to fairy forms the winds upon the wing;
Oh, could I all of this and more—all else to me were given;
If I, whene'er I slept, within an angel's arms could rest,
I'd give all these, and then methinks I'd know the bliss of heaven
If I could only lay my head one moment on thy breast.

Then like the song that sweetly thrilled, then died while joy imparting,
Yea, like the rose that bloomed to die beneath a sky most fair,

This moment be as fleeting, yet, within that brief
space hiding,
Were more of rapture, more of joy, than love,
sweet love, can bear.
E'en were I queen of heaven's hosts, of all fair
beings fairest,
I yet had not known happiness — I'd come to
earth in quest
Of this, my love; and, oh, 't would be the moment
dearest, rarest,
If it were mine to lay my head one moment on
thy breast.

TO LIVE.

"It is not all of life to live,"
A precious gem of poet's thought;
The numbered years we sadly give,
And learn to live.

I have not lived in vain if I
Have offered but one kindly word,
Have kissed away while moments fly
One weary sigh.

Or if, perchance, for one in need
Of mercy and a helping hand,
I lend my own — no censure heed,
But sow good seed.

It may be when the day is drear,
I pluck a rose of brightest hue,
And let it bear a ray of cheer
To one most dear.

To pray for some poor heart forgive,
If one have wronged thee, aye, to sing
Tho' tears are in thine eyes, believe
'T is this to live.

I WILL BE TRUE.

I WILL be true; we 've said good-by,
We 'll meet no more, love, you and I;
  Let silence keep her royal throne,
  The future shall the past atone,
The coming years may drag or fly,

Like clouds in yonder dismal sky,
Earth's blossoms droop, and fade and die,
  So doth each joy; yet I depone,
    I will be true.

Fond memories of the past draw nigh,
When wrapped in slumber I shall lie;
  Bring back the one I love, alone,
  Whom death nor demons shall dethrone
From my true heart—we 've said good-by,
    I will be true.

SAILING.

LIFE is a great, great ocean, dear;
  Over her bosom glide
Beautiful forms that as swiftly go
  As the king of the night-wind rides.
And the skies are fair and the songs are rare,
  And we sip from the fount of pleasure,
While over the sea of life we sail,
  And hide in the heart love's treasure.

Out on the great wide ocean, dear,
  Two little boats are sailing;
Fate, who is king of the land and sea,
  Shall guide to the port unfailing.
And it may be, dear,—in the thought there's cheer,—
  They shall meet on the shining river.
Oh, it may be, dear, in a golden hour,
  They shall meet, though they part forever.

WE COULD NOT KNOW.

We could not know, when we said good-by,
We parted forever, you and I.
The sun rose high in the golden east;
We smiled at parting, for at the least,
Since both are young we shall meet again,
We said,—and we asked not where or when.

The train that bore me away from you
(We were only friends, but fond and true)
Carried me back to my own abode;
The next day over the selfsame road
You passed—but the days were sunny, bright;
It seemed we had only said good-night.

You went your way, and I went mine;
The years sped by 'til they numbered nine.
Again I went for a summer's rest
To the old retreat,—it seemed the best,
For the dear old paths by heart I knew,
And 't was there, my friend, I first met you.

'T was there we parted, and ne'er a word
Of you, my friend, had I ever heard.
When I asked of you, they whispered "dead."
"No! No!" I cried, but they only said:
"Yes, killed by an accident the day
It would be a year he 'd gone away."

We could not know when we said good-by,
We parted forever, you and I;
We could not taste in the bowl we quaffed
The wormwood bitter, and so we laughed,
And heeded not how the hours flew,
For the skies above were fair and blue.

To-night my soul, into anguish hurled,
Would call you back from the spirit world,—
Would call you back that I now might say,
Friend kneel with me here, and let us pray.
I cannot forget, my friend so dear,
That I said this not, and death so near.

Will you meet me, friend, at God's white throne,
And there condemn that I did not own,

By all that I said and all I did,
The "hope" that within my heart I hid?
O friend, dear friend, may your soul find peace,
Lest death into torture mine release.

O soul, be it stranger, brother, friend,
You meet in the world, an effort spend
To guide that soul to the realms of light,
Ere ever he pass from out your sight.
You 'll weep not then as I weep, altho'
I say in my heart, "We could not know."

MY GIFTS.

I SEEK not jewels rare nor perfumes sweet
This Christmas day,
But, Father, kneeling at Thy feet,
A firmer trust is all my need,
A purer heart, for this I plead;
These give, I pray.

FORGIVENESS.

You go your way, dear one, and I,
  Altho' you made my heart to bleed,
Am praying you 'll return; maybe,
  Your soul not yet has felt the need
Of pardon and of peace, and yet
  I long to fold you to my breast,
And kiss your eyes, your lips, and bid
  Your wand'ring spirit find sweet rest.

You do not like to say, "forgive,"
  You fear to come lest I 'll reprove;
The years go by, and you forget
  I gave to you my soul's best love.
And think you I 'd be stern and cold?
  Ah, little do you know my heart;
I 've all forgotten now, dear one,
  But that as friends we did not part.

If I were you, and mine the wrong,
  Before to-morrow's setting sun

I 'd kneel before you, dear, and plead
  Your pardon for the evil done.
And yet I would not have you ask —
  What! need you ask? does love still live?
Dear heart, I love you — all forget,
  And sweet it is just to forgive.

TO THE VIOLINIST.

SOFTLY, sweetly, grand, majestic,
Float the tones upon the air;
Unto one of love they whisper,
To another breathe a prayer.
What the tale, O strange musician,
Thou art seeking to declare?
Dost thou tell of joy or sadness?
Are thy visions marred or fair?

Who can tell, who can interpret
What thou sayest? Enter in
To thy secret, hidden meaning,
Dreamer with the violin?
For thy tones are sweet, yea, sweeter
Than in dreams the lover's kiss,
And anon they trill and tremble,
Like the song of birds we miss.

Then the tones die out in sadness,
Naught save longing and regret

Speak the heart, for at thy bidding
Memory awakes — and yet
Would I hide within the casket
Of my life of yesterday
Dreams that vanished with the waking?
Still forget to love and pray?

Ah, I caught the white-winged message,
Like the poet's jeweled lance,
Higher rose the strains majestic:
Then in one swift, burning glance
Spoke he all his soul; and never
In a world of strife and sin,
Shall I meet again the dreamer
With the dear, loved violin.

TRUE LOVE.

CAN the years rob thee,
  Dear heart of my heart,
Of that I give thee,
  Of myself a part?

Love is God-given!
  Is faithful and true!
Seest thou not, dear,
  The heavens are blue?

And the great God paints
  The blue in the skies,
Faithful each morning,
  When night's darkness dies.

So He doth bury
  Deep down in my soul,
A love that shall live
  While the ages shall roll!

And faithful each morning,
He 'll water anew
This love that is burning
In my heart for you.

THOU HAST A HOPE.

THOU hast a hope within thy breast,
A cherished, sweet desire;
Nay, more — it is, though well concealed,
A deathless flame of fire.

The gods have kissed thy ruby lips,
Their gift has left a madness
To tear the veil from poet's heart,
And sing the world thy gladness.

Thy song is sung and dies unheard,
The world is full of beauty;
But sing again, be not cast down,
Sing on and do thy duty.

Have faith in God, have faith in man,
Have faith in efforts given;
Keep smiling on, the darkest clouds
Shall flee, by sunshine driven.

The soul that's brave, that dares to try,
For him the stars are shining;
Then sing, I pray, the poet's lay,
And cease thy heart's repining.

GOD LIVES.

GOD lives, and rules the universe,
While countless ages roll!
God lives! Again I would rehearse,
He told it to my soul.

"HE DON'T KNOW ME."

[The following verses were suggested by a visit of mercy paid by the writer to a poor abandoned woman in her prison cell.]

DARK is the dungeon where she hides,
  Crushed by her sin and shame,
Fair is her face and young is she;
  Lost, but for her Christ came.
One who has felt the touch of God,
  Tells of His love so free,
Whispers of pardon, but said she:
  "Woman, He don't know me."

Once in the years not long gone by,
  One little babe just born,
Nestled close to its mother's heart,
  Glad was its young life's morn.
Ah, seems to me I hear them yet,
  Prayers by that mother given:
"Father, oh, lead my baby's feet
  Straight to the gates of heaven."

Years rolled away, that mother died,—
Sin claimed that life so fair;
Now she is sinking 'neath her shame,
Filled with a dark despair.
Thus when these words were said to her,
"Jesus is seeking thee,"
Melted to tears she sadly said,
"Woman, He don't know me."

Ye who are mothers, do ye hear
This poor girl's said refrain?
Press to your heart your daughters fair,
Shield them from sin and pain.
Yet as ye would they were done by,
So unto others be,
Who in their shame hide from their God,
Saying, "He don't know me."

Ye who are 'neath the blood of Christ,
Blow ye your trumpets, blow!
Bring the poor lost ones home to God,
Go to the desert, go!
Can ye who feel the love of God
Setting your spirits free,

Go on rejoicing while lost souls
Cry out, "He don't know me"?

Oh, for the hearts that feel the cost
Christ for the lost ones gave,
The hearts that care not where they go,
God's erring ones to save.
Washed in the blood of Christ from sin
And shame, they shall be free;
Our Saviour came to save the lost
Who say, "He don't know me."

REST THEE, HUSH THEE.

Rest thee, my turbulent spirit,
  Hush thee, my longings so wild;
Pray, and the Father will hear it,
  And he will comfort His child.

DEATH AND DAWN.

I.

THOU 'RT passing, year of nineteen hundred one,
I 'll kiss thee soon the last, long, sad farewell,
And hear in tearful agony the knell
That tells me thou art gone. God's golden sun
Will rise upon a glad new year begun
The moment that thou goest; yet the spell
With which my heart was bound to thee so well
Shall nevermore be broken. There is none
Whom I shall love as thee thro' all the years.
Thou gavest me the sweetest joy my life
Has known or yet can know; the passing breath
Shall not make me unfaithful; thro' sad tears
I 'll mourn thee as a husband mourns his wife
Departed. Ah! the old year lies in death!

II.

And thou hast dawned, bright New Year morn, all hail!
So young, so fair thou art! What! must I kiss
Thy rosy lips and every thought dismiss

Of him whom I have buried? Still the wail
Of his farewell I hear, and shall I fail
  In faithfulness to him who gave me this
  My marriage hour, love's own embrace, love's
    bliss,
And sent me on the sea of joy to sail?
No, no! but while I rest in thine embrace
  I 'll strive to be more worthy him that 's gone,
And with thy help I 'll seek God's smiling face
  And struggle upward, heavenward, and on
Toward the goal of life. Come, then, a space;
  Together we shall run,—I bless thy dawn!

MY YOUTH.

If I had beauty, love, and health,
And fame, and every joy, forsooth,
I'd give them all and count it wealth,
If only I might keep my youth.

THE MOTHER TO HER UNBORN BABE.

Come, little babe, to my waiting arms!
  Fondly my heart will welcome you!
Come, and perchance you 'll fill my soul
  Full of song, as he used to do
Whose plaintive voice I hear no more;
  Who, from the dawn 'til day was done,
Filled my heart with a joy untold,
  Then went away, my little one.

But when I hear your voice, my child,
  And when I see your laughing eyes,
It may be that, in anguish wild,
  I shall greet you, my babe, with cries
Welling up from a heart whose plea
  Is for a dream, if nothing more,
Bringing my lost babe back to me —
  Back, back, back from that mystic shore.

Your little fingers I shall love!
Oh, but another hand I 'll see,
And shall yearn for that hand once more
Placed in mine as it used to be.
While dear laughing eyes looked up to mine,
And a loved little form crept near my heart.
And oh, little babe, as I kiss your lips,
Bitterest tears from my eyes will start.

Come, little babe, but be not like him!
There is a place in my heart for you!
Leave to my memory little Jim,
As he used to be and he used to do.
And dear little babe, if your touch brings back
Longings greater than I can bear,
Oh, may I find the path to peace,
Still more oft in the hour of prayer.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

You have seen the clouds when they drift apart,
  Let the lovely sunshine through;
Thro' the clouds of life I have seen God's love
  Like the sunlight warm and true.

WHEN I MEET THEE.

When I meet thee,
Shall I greet thee
With a sigh?
Shall I turn away my face
That the blushes sure will grace,
So that love you cannot trace
In my eye?

Ah, I'll greet thee
When I meet thee
By-and-by,
With a glance that speaks the love
Angels whisper from above.
Love is ever true to love—
Crowned am I.

I WOULD NOT FORGET.

I.

I HAVE sinned! and tho' that sin is pardoned,
And peace flows like a river in my breast,
Altho' there is no longer that unrest
Which followed me when by sin I was burdened,
My memory forgets not how, when hardened
By sin's defilement, Jesus came in quest
Of even me; and I received this guest,
Was cleansed from guilt, and all my vision broadened.
But could I all forget, how vile I was,
How far I wandered and how black my woe,
Ere mercy cried, and I my Saviour met,
I 'd lose remembrance of my soul's great cause
For gratitude; my tears e'en now will flow,
For I have sinned, and I would not forget.

GOD DOES FORGET.

II.

God does forget! remembers sin no more,
When He the sinner pardons; and we read
Within His book, of man, the sinner's need,

And God's free grace; of Christ the open door,
For souls sin-sick, and wretched, and heart-sore.
This book reveals to man that Christ will plead
For sinful souls, when penitent indeed,
And in this book (I 've read it o'er and o'er)
Man's sins are blotted from God's memory!
Behind His back He hides them; as it were
He drops them in the great depths of the sea,
Where waters never troubled are, nor stir,—
So well He doth forget. God's books for thee,
Sin-pardoned soul, have neither blot, nor blur.

UNKIND WORDS.

THE words that thrilled with sweetest joy,
We may sometimes forget. In vain
We struggle to forget those words
That pierced our heart with pain.

IT WILL COME BACK.

It will come back! I 've written as I could,
From out the deepest depths of my own soul.
And now I send it out to find its goal,
The poem that my soul pronounces good.

I feel so tender toward the tiny thing
That I have written; as it were my child,
I clasp it lovingly with longings wild,
Then send it forth upon its untried wing.

But tho' it be a message full of worth,
I know full well it will not be received.
And oh, I love it so! and am sore grieved
That it must perish in the hour of birth.

I know God is the giver of my song,
'T is He doth make the music in my heart!
The critic may not recognize my art,
And he may find my measure short or long.

And yet, some day my soul shall utterance find,
  And voices that are hushed now in my breast,
  Shall cry out in their torture and unrest,
And o'er the earth be wafted on the wind.

I know it, oh, I feel it! but alack!
  The weary years shall intervene before,
  Some baby of my brain shall ope the door
Of fame, and enter there, and not come back.

I LOVE TO HEAR YOU WHISTLE WHEN YOU 'RE COMING.

Oh, I love to hear you whistle
  When you 're coming home at night,
Though the way be dark and dismal,
  Or the stars are shining bright.
Ah, 't is true you did not know it,
  But it thrills me with delight,
If I hear you gaily whistle
  When you 're coming home at night.

In this world of sin and sorrow,
  There are haunts to lure the gay,
And I would not have you venture
  Where you would not dare to pray.
Then I listen in the silence
  For your footstep quick and light,
And ere long I hear you whistle
  When you 're coming home at night.

If I 'm waiting in the darkness —
  For a mother waits, you know —

And the dismal wind is sighing,
  And the clock is ticking slow,
All the singing of the angels
  Could not give me such delight
As the music of your whistle
  When you 're coming home at night.

For I know your mind is merry,
  And I know your heart is gay,
And I 'm sure you 've not been walking
  In the paths that lead astray.
If your heart had lost its music,
  And your soul had lost its sight,
You would never come a-whistling
  When you 're coming home at night.

NEARER, MY GOD, TO THEE.

"NEARER, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee":
Oh, I have wandered far,
So far from Thee.
Yet how I long to flee,
Flee from my sin to Thee;
Open Thy arms to me,
Mercy I cry.

Now let Thy precious love
Thrill me again,
Forget that I was weak,
Fell into sin.
Jesus, I yearn to be
Drawn close again to Thee,
Clings my poor heart to Thee,—
Save, or I die.

"Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee":

Weeping I seek Thy arms,
  Open for me.
Now through Thy love to me
My life I yield to Thee;
Oh, I'll stay close to Thee,—
  Love is my tie.

THE LAST WORDS OF MOTHER.

THE last words of mother when I left the farm —
A bright, happy boy, never dreaming of harm —
She wept, and she left her sweet kiss on my face,
While looking to God, in the parting, for grace,
And then as I galloped away she called, "Roy,"—
I turned in my saddle —"God bless you, my boy."

The years quickly vanished, I wandered afar,
Grew reckless and weary; it seemed every star
Was blotted from heaven, so dark was my night,
So cruel my fate, when, at last, shone a light
In the heart that sin's curse had long sought to destroy,—
The last words of mother, "God bless you, my boy."

The waves rolled between us, I ne'er saw her more,
And yet as I 'd done in the sweet days of yore,

I sat in the twilight and sang mother's song's,
And wept bitter tears o'er the past and its wrongs.
When others have cursed me these words gave me joy —
The last words of mother, "God bless you, my boy."

Methinks in the light of that beautiful home,
When toiling is over, no longer to roam,
The words that recalled me from sin and its charm,
When I went a-roaming and left the old farm,
When mother shall greet me, perchance, then in joy
She 'll murmur these loved words, "God bless you, my boy."

FRIENDSHIP ONLY.

YES, we are only friends, but dear the tie
That binds our very souls; and it is best
For you, my friend, and best for me to rest
In this sweet peace, nor wake at last to sigh
For sweeter chords to bind our hearts in one—
A closer tie — ah, dear, the hope is vain;
Your path lies yonder, mine is here. In vain,
And sore at heart, we'd wish the chords undone.

I know your heart could answer mine; I own
The sweet response that echoes in my soul,
And oft I would that I might give the whole
Of this great throbbing heart to you alone.
I know your kiss would wake the sleeping fires
That in my bosom burn, but then, I say,
'T is best for you and best for me alway,
To be as friends — friendship hath no desires.

WE TWO SHALL DRIFT APART.

ALAS! we two shall drift thro' life, apart, apart,
Tho' every thought is tender in each throbbing heart.
No voice to break the silence saith, each shall remembered be;
Yet, neither can forget, and oh, dear soul, I pray for thee.

And it may be we shall not meet on earth again;
Apart, we two shall journey on thro' toil and pain.
But soon, ah, soon we two shall sleep beneath the sod,
And rise to be together at the throne of God.

So soon 't will be, we little know how very soon;
Life's morning past, and passing, too, life's perfect noon,
We journey toward the setting sun, life's evening comes;
Soon we 'll have solved life's problems, balanced all life's sums.

The sin, the sorrow, and the darkness fled, we two shall stand
Before the mighty throne of God, dear, hand in hand.
Each will forgive and all forget, when, at the last,
Earth-life and all its troubled days are in the past.

And so, I send this message, making bold, but you 'll forgive:
Earth-life is but a shadow; in that better world we live.
Oh, join me, dear one, yonder where we 'll as the angels be,
And together sing God's praises thro' a long eternity.

THAT SWEET, SAD WAY.

I HAVE noticed that love hath changeful ways,
  Sometimes she is on the wing,
And happy as birds on summer days,
  She can only laugh and sing.
And gentle and sweet, it is ever meet
  That love should be glad and gay,
But passion as deep as the ocean's depth,
  I see in that sweet, sad way.

The bright eyes soft with the unshed tears,
  And the voice so kind and low,
'T is a love that is free from doubts and fears,
  'T is a gift from God, we know.
And my heart is glad, and my heart is sad,
  And I sing and then I pray,
Whenever the one I love is near,
  And wearing that sweet, sad way.

TO IRENE.

OFTTIMES I wonder, lady-bird, Irene,
Dost thou remember still that summer day
When first we met? Ah, yes, I think alway
Thy heart will faithful be. My gentle queen,
E'en from that day thy face no more I 've seen,
Yet in that hour ye stole my heart away,
And thinkest thou, Irene, my thought could stray?
Could oil or water, dear one, come between
Our welded souls? Ah, no! and thou art mine!
And in the precious locket of our hearts
Our secret hopes lie hidden — yet, I ween,
E'en tho' the love-light in thine eye doth shine,
At thought of all our loneliness oft starts
The bitter tear — is 't so, my sweet Irene?

ONLY A LITTLE NEWSBOY.

ONLY a little newsboy:
The light was growing dim,
That winter's eve when first we met;
Nobody thought of him.
His face was wan and haggard,
His feet bled on the ice,
His little voice so trembled that
I bought his paper twice.

Then went my way and left him.
That night I could not rest;
It seemed my own lost little one
Was tugging at my breast.
Ah, he was never hungry,
Barefooted in the snow,
And yet the Saviour called him home.
Well, I arose to go,

And bring the little outcast
To the shelter of my home;

No longer should he suffer want,
No longer homeless roam.
The snow was falling faster,
The wind was sharp and wild,
As on I went in search of him,
That little outcast child.

I neared a darkened alley,
And found the little lad;
Some boys were bending over him —
His voice was almost glad.
I heard him say, "I 'm dying;
I 'm going there to-night,
Where father and my mother is —
It 's warm up there, and bright."

And then he said, "Good-by, boys."
The little outcast died.
His papers folded carefully
Were lying at his side.
Too late I sought to save him;
He lived unloved, unknown,—
Only a little orphaned lad,
Cast out to die alone.

APART.

THERE may be those who can forget,
  There may be those whose love can die,
And other loves prove sweet — and yet,
  As day by day goes by,
I dream of him in distant lands,
  Whose voice I ne'er shall hear again,
Nor feel the touch of his dear hands,
  Nor wake from tears and pain.

But this I know: through all the years
  That are to come I 'll love but one;
For him my tenderness, my tears,
  Until life's race is run.
He heard and heeded duty's call,
  And, oh, amid the cold world's snares,
I sent him forth and gave him all —
  My love, my faith, my prayers.

We'll meet no more; my heart is dumb, —
  And yet it seems this cannot be;

But then if I should bid him come,
Resigning all for me,
My kiss would sting him at the last,
He 'd rend the chains he fain would wear.
No, no! our hopes, our dreams — the past —
Are voices stilled in prayer.

I KNOW ONE HEART IS TRUE.

We parted, and forever.
O God! that last adieu,
'T would break my heart if not for this —
I know one heart is true.

He 'll roam the wide world over,
And love his path will strew
With sweet enticements, yet I know —
I know one heart is true.

What though the days are dreary?
Some penance must be due
For love so great: I am content —
I know one heart is true.

Ah, true; yes, true as Heaven,
And faithful hearts are few;
How sweet my rest, how firm my trust,—
I know one heart is true.

We ne'er shall meet again, love,
The past we 'll not renew;
Yet each may say, and rightly, dear,
"I know one heart is true."

You kissed my lips, and weeping
We spoke the last adieu;
Until we meet in heaven at last,
I know thou wilt be true.

REPENTANCE.

O SOUL, where is the place of rest?
  Thy sins, a heavy load,
Do sore distress thee, and they stand
  Betwixt thee and thy God!

Soul, soul, thou canst not longer bear
  This burden! Wouldst be free?
Dost know that there is One who died,
  Who bore thy sins for thee?

Dost thou renounce the life of sin?
  Art thou resolved to be
A lowly follower of Him
  Who died on Calvary?

Then come and kneel before thy God,
  And thou shalt feel His kiss,
And thou shalt see Him face to face,
  In such an hour as this.

Arise! and thy soul's gratitude
Will melt in fervent love;
And all thy life henceforth shall be
A gift that love to prove.

THE HIDDEN TREASURE.

O Love, like the waves of the ocean,
So beautiful, boundless, and free,
Come hither; my heart, in its yearning,
At rest on thy bosom would be.
I hold out my hands in entreaty,
I plead that thy kiss may be mine,—
O Love, art thou deaf to my calling?
My heart yields her treasure for thine.

I gaze on the night, and she whispers,
"At twilight come hither, and Love,
Entreated, may lend his embraces."
I gaze on the bright stars above;
The heavens are singing their love-song,
The earth in its darkness is drear;
At twilight I seek for my treasure,
But find that it nowhere is near.

I turn to the morn in her glory,
I see that the sun gives a kiss

To each humble rose, and the dew-drops
Are making bright eyes in their bliss.
And yet in their midst I 'm bewildered,
The treasure I seek cannot see;
I know not the way of enchantment,
And Love hies away, lost to me.

But now is my heart swept and garnished,
And bended my knees are in prayer;
Come hither, O Love, in thy fulness,
Nor doom me to death and despair.
I wait in my heart's deep contrition,
I yearn for thy kiss on my brow;
O God, Thou hast heard my petition,
And, Love, thou art blessing me now.

BECAUSE I LOVE YOU SO.

You think it strange that I should miss,
Thro' all the day, your good-by kiss.
You say that you forgot it, quite.
You did! But I remembered! Dwight,
'T is foolish, but my heart will cry,
When you forget to say good-by.

Sometimes you seem to love me less.
I 'm silent — but all happiness
Goes from my heart. I sit and dream,
How very queer, and cold you seem.
You tell me I should know you love,
Without the signs that love would prove.

You may be right! Yet oh, those days
When I was on your lips in praise,
And petted like a happy child,
Come floating o'er my thought! I 'm wild
With longing for the words you said,
Before we two were ever wed.

'T was "darling" then; 't is not so now!
You merely sit with thoughtful brow,
And wanting me, you speak my name,
While in my heart my thought will frame
The words I loved to hear you say,
Ere we were wed ten years last May.

It vexes you if I complain;
A wiser heart would hide its pain!
But oh, I yearn so for your touch!
And if I vex you overmuch,
Dear heart, dear heart, do you not know
'T is all because I love you so?

REMORSE.

I WRONGED thee — ah, 't is bitter now;
Forgive, or yet forgive me not,
Whiche'er it be, thou wilt allow
The deed can never be forgot.

I did thee harm. O injured one,
What I have felt thou hast not known;
I would recall the deed — 't is done!
I suffer! God, may this atone!

TOGETHER.

I THINK, sometimes, that they who walk
  Life's pathway, hand in hand
And heart to heart, on earth as one,
  Shall be in yonder land,
Where soul shall voice itself to soul
  And none shall be unknown,
United still; together be,
  Before the great white throne.

And dear, I think we 'll roam about
  In perfect comradeship;
And from the selfsame golden bowl
  The sparkling nectar sip.
We 'll know e'en so much better then
  The joy of life, dear mate,
When we together stand beside
  Heaven's open pearly gate,
And watch the toilworn pilgrims come,
  With rapture passing in;

We 'll weep glad tears that these have found
  The cleansing from all sin.

And by-and-by in that glad throng,
  A cherished face we 'll see,
And as they come, our dear ones through
  The gates, you 'll lean toward me,
And lay your joyful lips on mine.
  Oh, sweet will be your kiss,
When we are purged from every stain,
  And dwell in immortal bliss.
And I am sure that what I say
  Is not a dream, dear heart,
For I in heaven could not be glad,
  If we must dwell apart.

LOVE IS TRUE TO LOVE.

Dost ask if I 'll be true to thee —
To thee, the one I love?
Go seek an answer in the works
Of him who rules above,
For all the works of Nature prove
That love is true to love.

The flowers love the summer-time;
When springtime doth appear
The roses bloom in greeting, and
In love to summer's cheer;
They love no other season, and
They bloom but once a year.

The tiny little birdies do
Rest safely in their nest;
The parent bird will seek them food
Before he seeketh rest.
But why not feed the neighbor birds?
He loves his own the best.

A mother loves her little one,
  And from him would she stray
To seek another child to love,
  Altho' it be more gay?
Ah, love is ever true to love,
  And true love cannot stray.

THE MURMUR OF THE WIND.

WHEN I 'm sitting lone and quiet,
With my knitting in my hand,
Almost nodding, and my fancies
Like a blooming rose expand,
Suddenly there comes a murmur,
All my dreams to interscind:
'T is the low, the plaintive mumble
Of the softly sighing wind.

As I listen comes an echo
From some distant, unknown shore,
Though I know 't is but the breezes
Singing there beneath my door.
Yet the plaintive song I welcome
As a fairy to abscind
Past and present, while the future
Prints her kisses on the wind.

THE APPROACH OF SPRING.

BEAUTIFUL spring is drawing near,
  How like a stately queen she comes,
Trailing her robes of gorgeous bloom!
  Sweet is the smile her face assumes,
O'er all the earth her banners wave,
  Queen of the seasons she shall be,
Breathing her perfume everywhere,
  Leaving her kiss on leaf and tree.

O heart of mine, her bridegroom be!
  Haste thee to kiss her brow so fair,
Rest thy head on her bosom white,
  Kiss her neck and her shining hair.
Hark! her voice is the song of birds,
  Every heart of man her toy,
Yet unto thee she beckons: come,
  Sail with her on a sea of joy.

LITTLE GIRL, MY OWN.

Sweet gift from God she came,
  Dear little girl, my own.
What cared I then for fame?
Ah, she should bear my name;
Sweet gift from God she came,
  Dear little girl, my own.

Daily I did invoke
  Heaven's blessing on my child.
All good within me woke,
God's voice within me spoke!
Daily I did invoke
  Heaven's blessing on my child.

Gently I led her feet,
  Lest they should go astray;
And to the mercy-seat
Led I my child, so sweet,
Gently I led her feet,
  Lest they should go astray.

So passed the fleeting years;
  She is a child no more.
Ne'er hath she caused me tears,
This tho't my soul oft cheers;
So passed the fleeting years,—
  She is a child no more.

What shall the future bring,
  Dear little girl, my own?
Yes, you will take your wing,
Love's sweetest notes you 'll sing;
This shall the future bring,
  Dear little girl, my own.

And be it even so;
  This way is sweetest, best;
Joy from deep wells doth flow,
When love abides, I know.
Ah, be it even so!
  This way is sweetest, best.

BE KIND.

So MANY there are who pass you by,
When dark is the sky above you;
So many who will not heed your cry—
Be kind to the hearts that love you.

So often an unkind, thoughtless word,
To bitterest tears will move you,
For many are careless: tighter gird
Your armor, and let it prove you.

And ever, my friend, where'er you be,
Look up to the stars above you,
And vow that the angel band shall see
You're kind to the hearts that love you.

SHE ONCE WAS FAIR.

She once was fair, I hear you say;
Her golden hair and eyes of gray
  Made in each heart for her a place,
  And that her sweet and gentle face
Was bright as noontide of the day;
You envied her, forgot to pray,
Because she chanced to pass your way.
  Why say you, then, with laughing grace,
    She once was fair?

When I am old, have lost each ray
Of beauty's light, oh, sing no lay
  Of sad regret; let time efface
  All that is fair, and weave his lace
Upon my brow — but do not say,
    She once was fair.

LITTLE THINGS.

We may have naught of wealth — aye, aye,
We may not sail the seas;
It may not be our lot to rest
While others labor. These
Are joys we covet, it may be;
We envy princes, kings,
And heed not all the wealth of bliss
That lies in little things.

We should be happier far, I know,
If we would seek the good
That lies about us everywhere,
And guard our daily mood.
Who looks for flowers finds them, tho'
Weeds grow on every side;
To him who keeps a cheerful heart,
Joy will not be denied.

Who has not felt a happy thrill
To see a letter thrust,

In distribution of the mail,
  Into his box, in trust
That it will be the missive sought?
  Who has not learned, I say,
That little things make glad the heart,
  Until we sing or pray?

And then I 've seen a day so dark,
  So filled with pain and gloom,
That in my heart I 've said, for joy
  There is no place, no room.
Yet ere the twilight shadows fell,
  A friend's sweet voice I 've heard,
And found a balm for every wound,
  In friendship's loving word.

The little things of life, ah, me!
  The tear, the kiss, the prayer,
The kindly pressure of the hand,
  Are things to banish care;
And if we listen we shall hear
  Life's rhythm and its rhyme,
And find, perchance, in little things
  Heart's incense sweet as thyme.

And if recorded be our names
In that great book on high,
'T will be because the little things
We guard with careful eye.
"The little foxes spoil the vines;"
Who bridleth not his tongue,
Shall hear on that great judgment day
The saddest knell e'er rung.

And so I sing of little things
In earth, and sky, and sea,
And count my wrongs as little things,
My blessings great; may be
I've gathered roses bright as e'er
Have graced a king's fair bower,
I've learned to pass the weeds all by,
But never pass a flower.

BEAUTY.

SEEKING, seeking beauty!
  Ah, my friend, dost know 't is
Ne'er a task to find it
  In the heart where love is?

FAITHFUL.

[The following verses were suggested to the author by seeing, at a summer watering-place, a young woman with a face like a flower and a wealth of hair as white as snow. It was said that her hair turned white in the night her husband came to a frightful death by accident, though it was not known by any just what the accident was. She was silent, and with her mother; both ladies dressed always in black. They came and went, neither woman forming acquaintances. Always, however, it was noted that her beautiful face wore a look of peace and resignation.]

So BEAUTIFUL, men marveled at her grace,
And feasted hungry eyes upon her face.
A stately queen — lithe, willowy, and tall;
Yet something in her bearing did appall,
For silence was about her like a cloud,
And mystery enwrapped her like a shroud.

Where'er she passed, men strangely silent grew,
And asked her name, whence came she; no one knew.

All followed her with the admiring eye,
Yet looked not in her face as she passed by,
And one asked of another, "Have you seen
The snowy-haired young widow? Such a queen!"

I met her first one day when I was ill,
And waited at the spring my glass to fill.
Perchance she knew by my own sombre dress,
That I was widowed, too; could not repress
A longing to some sad heart to confide
The woe that wrecked her young life when a bride.

We sat down in the sunshine at the spring,
Where hum of voices on our ear would ring
Like sweet-toned bells, and not disturb our rest;
And then each heart to other heart confessed
The pain that time can never take away,
And withal, too, the hope that blessed each day.

This was her story: "We were nearing home,
(We had been wedded but one year,) were come
Back from a lengthened journey, to the place

That Arthur said I like a queen would grace,
And he should be my king, when we at last
Were keeping house. The train sped quickly past

"The little towns that neighbored us, and oft
My husband whispered in his accents soft,
As he would take my hand in his, and look
Into my eyes, with loving eyes that spoke
His happy heart, 'Ah, dear wife, do you see
We very soon again at home shall be?'

"Then all at once, the train was in a wreck!
My husband's body, covered to his neck
With debris, lay before me when I found
My sober mind. O God! he lay there bound
Both hand and foot, and but his face was free;
He could not speak, but lay and looked at me.

"His eyes spoke all his torture, and his white
And anguished face told of a newer fright.
One moment I stood gazing, then I knew
The debris was on fire. O God! I flew
Like mad to rescue him I loved! I tore
The timbers from his breast all wounded sore.

"I told him I would save him! Swift there came
Right up into my face a tongue of flame!
At once my husband shouted, 'Darling, go,
And save yourself,—you can't save me, you know!'
And then I fell upon him, dying, there,
And kissed his lips that murmured forth a prayer.

"The flames were creeping closer, raging hot!
Strong hands and cruel, dragged me from the spot;
They tore me from him, tho' I would die, too.
And there he lay and looked, and cried, 'Be true.'
I cried, 'They tear me from you; till I die,
I will be true and meet you in the sky.'

"When I regained my consciousness, I lay
In our own little home, where, on that day,
He had so longed to be. I came near death,
And when I lived, regretted I had breath;
And loved ones bending o'er me, said, that night
I saw my husband's fate, my hair turned white.

"I have no faith that spirits do return
To earth, to be near us who weep and mourn;

And yet, my heart oft fancies he is near —
Sometimes his footstep seems my soul to hear,
And in this fancied sweet companionship
I feel his kiss upon my brow and lip.

"I do believe he sees me where he is,
And knows that evermore my love is his,
And ne'er can be another's; and I feel
Ecstatic pleasure o'er my senses steal,
When ofttimes I sit dreaming of that hour,
When we shall be at home in some sweet bower,

"Where souls immortal dwell. It must be so!
God will unite us once again, I know.
Not husband, wife, but dearest comrades, there,
For I am true, and this my constant prayer.
And so I am not sad at heart, you see,
For at the gates of heaven he waits for me."

I WAS UNKIND.

I WAS unkind, and yet I knew
I loved him — then was love untrue?
  Ah me, I saw him turn away;
  He tried to smile, tried to be gay,
A pained look in his eyes of blue.
He knew not why as moments flew,
I silent was — an effort, too,
  It cost me; yet that fateful day
    I was unkind.

To-day were glad could I undo
The evil done; I would renew
  The happiness I wrecked, and say,
  "Forgive, oh, love, forgive, I pray;
Look in my eyes — forget, will you?
    I was unkind."

MOONLIGHT ON THE SEA.

Oh, the moon sails over the silver sea,
And you go a-sailing away from me.
It is long, so long since that summer night
When we watched the waves in the pale moonlight,
And there on the deck you told your love,
Under the listening stars above.

But the daylight fades, and the night appears,
And I sit in the dark to hide my tears.
The mind like a tortured piercing cry
Re-echoes the words, "My love, good-by,"
And the moon sails over a silver sea,
Where you go a-sailing away from me.

It is long, so long, but the ships sail on,
And ever I know those days are gone.
There are voices stilled in the aching heart,
And memory's tears to the eyes will start;
But the moon sails over the silver sea,
And you have forgotten those days, and me.

MY ART.

WHEN in the deep recesses of my soul
I find a little message for some heart,
I trace it on the snowy paper; then
I bow my head, and thank God for my art.

It may be that my lines are rude, and rough,
Perchance I cannot sing to any ear,
Save that of the unlearn'd; yet 't is enough,
If any soul that needs my song shall hear.

Yet this I know: I would not sing unless
I could not silence keep; from out my heart
I sing my song and find true happiness,
Yea, life's divinest joy, in this my art.

THE SUMMER IS GONE.

I KNEW not when she came what wealth of flowers
She 'd scatter 'neath my feet; nor did I know
From out her springs of joy there 'd come to flow
A river grand and deep. Ah, golden hours,
Ye came to me in shady nooks and bowers,
So filled with happy voices soft and low,
I can but drop a tear. As melts the snow,
As quickly come and go the springtime showers,
Ye vanished and are gone. But sweeter dreams
Than e'er I knew, and moments rich and rare,
Are hiding in my soul in still retreat,
And at the touch of memory it seems
They call thee back, oh, fairest of the fair,
Dear summer gone for aye, but oh, how sweet!

SUNLIGHT.

I SAW a daisy crushed upon the sod,
Where late some wayward wandering foot had
trod.

Ere long the sunlight kissed its snowy face,
And it revived to live in newer grace.

I saw a life bowed down with sin and shame,
I saw that life redeemed in Jesus' name.

The sunlight for the flower, and God's love
To guide the faltering steps to courts above.

BE KIND.

"Be kind." It seemed a little child had spoken,
As I lay dreaming there beneath the trees;
I wakened, still was echoed on the breeze,
"Be kind"—save this, the silence was unbroken.
Whence came the voice the stillness gave no token—
It seemed the distant murmur of the seas
Took up these two sweet words, yea, only these;
And now I knew the voice of God had spoken,
For wan, sad faces came, and clustering
About my heart, they entered there to find
Sweet love who came to me on golden wing,
With pity's garments clothed me, soul and mind.
Then mercy kissed my lips; I learned to sing:
The theme of all my song is this, "Be kind."

WHISPERS MY HEART.

WHY is the day so bright?
  Why do I sing?
Oh, 't is because to-night
  I meet my king.

Swift, O my messengers,
  Quickly depart;
Tell him I wait. He comes,
  Whispers my heart.

Sing, O ye tiny birds,
  Gladden the day,
For ere the sun goes down,
  He comes this way.

Ah, from my soul the song
  Ne'er shall depart.
Deathless is love — true love —
  Whispers my heart.

LONGING.

WHAT art thou, O thou guest within my breast?
Thy burdened spirit wanders to and fro
As restless as the ocean's ebb and flow,
And lends my soul a spirit of unrest.
I would that thou shouldst leave me—it were best;
Thy presence as the moments come and go
Is torture,— this, and only this, I know.
Yet I have loved thee, fair, unwelcome guest,
And at thy bidding stretched my arms to find
But empty space, but falling tears and pain;
Where'er I go thou goest but to bind
Thy tyrant's cords about me. Yet refrain;
I've learned at last that thou art most unkind:
Oh, leave my heart, and ne'er come back again.

LIKE THE STRINGS OF THE OLD GUITAR.

An old guitar on a table lay,
In a room that was dark and still,
And the twilight shades at the close of day
Filled the room with gloom until,
As the soft winds sighed through the open door,
Like a breath from worlds afar,
They struck one chord that was wondrous sweet
From the strings of the old guitar.

And I seemed to see in the far-off past,
Where my youth and dreams both perished,
A life made glad with the dreams made real,
With the gifts and joys so cherished.
And I looked again, and a life I saw
Void of sin and selfish pleasure,
Tho' in this fair life not a dream came true,
And the years gave naught to treasure.

Then the night shades fell—like a great black sea
  Did the darkness float around me,
While the idols torn from a chastened heart
  Seemed to rise like ghosts about me.
Then I knew the gift that is best of all
  Is the peace that naught can mar.
Oh, respond, my heart, to the breath of good
  Like the strings of the old guitar!

REGRET.

WOULD that on mine no other lips had rested,
Would that no hand save thine had dared caress,
Would that no thrill of passion or of pleasure
Had pierced my heart or given happiness!
Ah, then the past, the present, and the future,
A gift most sweet I 'd gladly give to thee,
And now I should be blessed if ne'er another
Had loved me or had sailed with me life's sea.

If to thine heart so true I came from heaven,
If to thy lips I brought an angel's kiss,
Then were I worthy— then, my God, I 'd lay me
Sweetly to rest within the arms of bliss.
Then would I bid thee take my heart and hide it
Safely forever — it were then thine own;
Ah, if 't were true I ne'er had loved another,
No other loved me, called me his alone!

Yet with my soul I have not loved; oh, ever
True love has slumbered in my heart of pain;

But now, awakened, echoes and re-echoes,
  Haunting the soul forever and in vain :
Would I could rest within thine arms so tender,
  Weep on thy breast these tears of pain! And
    yet,
Now that I love and truly, all unworthy,
  Nothing is mine but weeping and regret.

MY GREAT SHIP.

My great ship sails the foaming sea,
Afar, afar away from me,
And all alone I kneel in prayer,
And plead that skies above be fair,
And winds be gently kind, aye, aye,
And speed my Great Ship on its way.

On board are all my treasures; gone
With that Great Ship that sailed at dawn,
Is wealth untold that all shall be
My heritage, when safe to me
That ship returns. Ah! jewels rare
Shall then bedeck my neck and hair.

Therefore, I wait its safe return,
And waiting, lo! my heart doth burn!
For love, and all of happiness,
Is in that absent one's caress,
Who is my "Great Ship," bearing all
My faith, my blessings great and small.

So sing, dear heart, as o'er the sea
You come a-sailing home to me.
Look up! and if the skies are blue,
Sing this: "I know a heart that 's true!
A heart that 's true, that 's true," repeat,
Until, dear heart, at last we meet.

ABIDE WITH ME.

When the flowers bloom about me,
  When the sun lights up the sky,
When the birds are sweetly singing,
  When no evil thing is nigh,
Fold me in thine arms, dear Saviour,
  Hold me closer, Lord, to Thee;
While the flowers bloom about me,
  Father, O abide with me!

When the night falls dark about me,
  Clouds have gathered in the sky,
When the birds have ceased their singing,
  When the blossoms droop and die,
Yet shall I sing on as gladly,
  Though Thy face I may not see,
If Thine arms of love enfold me.
  Father, O abide with me!

Yes, abide with me, my Saviour;
  Every joy would lose its sweet

If I'd wander from Thy presence—
Oh, I pray Thee, guide my feet!
Yea, Thy word shall light my pathway,
Give me life and love and Thee;
Thou hast said Thou 'lt ne'er forsake me,—
Evermore abide with me!

WHOE'ER THOU ART, IN SADNESS BOWED.

DEAR soul, whoe'er thou art,
In sadness bowed to-day,
Take thy pain-pierced heart,
And teach it how to pray.

Thy place in life came not
To thee by chance, dear soul,
Nor was it by thee sought,
But God hath planned the whole.

He giveth what is best!
And if to thee 'tis pain,
Canst thou not trust the rest?
For sorrow gets thee gain.

Then wilt thou not, dear soul,
Just take that pierced hand,
And tho' pain's billows roll,
Trust He doth understand?

For by-and-by your barque
Will reach that other shore,
Where angel voices, hark!
Are singing, "Weep no more."

TO STANLEY.

LITTLE lips, I cannot kiss you,
For you are so far away.
And I miss you — oh, I miss you,
And I do so yearn to-day
For the touch of loving fingers,
And a voice I cannot hear;
Oh, a memory precious lingers,
Sweet but sad in all life's cheer.

And to-day if I could fold you
As in days gone, to my breast,
Like a frantic thing I 'd hold you,
Closer, closer, darling, lest
You again from me should wander
Oh, my darling, is it right
We should thus be torn asunder,
Making all my day as night?

ANGELS' VOICES.

We 've heard them at morning, at noontide,
And oft in the still of the night,
The silver-toned voices of angels —
And almost their wings, snowy-white,
Have brushed us in passing; and ever
We welcome the heavenly guests
That beckon us onward and upward
Where God, the great Infinite, rests.

Sometimes when the soul grows aweary,
The angel of memory wakes
The heart to its sweet olden hunger,
And dreams of despair it forsakes.
Perchance it was only a footstep
That fell on the listening ear,
And echoed the one stilled forever,
Remembered with many a tear.

It may be when hushed into slumber,
That loved lips are pressed close to thine,

The dream angel hovers about thee,
And voices a carol divine.
It may be the scent of a flower,
That bloomed while the stars brightly shone,
While Hope sang her sweetest — this only,
And yet it hath sweetness unknown.

And so all about us are angels,
And he who will listen may hear
The voices so tender and holy
That wait for the listening ear.
We live, and the forms we have cherished
Pass onward and out of our sight,
But the voices, sweet voices, remind us
That over the way there 's no night.

FALSELY ACCUSED!

ACCUSED! and at the accusation, shame
Hath clothed a life and cursed an honest name;
A soul that leaned on God it hath abused,
A soul that was to sin's foul ways unused;
And God hath looked upon that aching heart,
And numbered all the actors in the part —
Falsely accused!

The play is on — for life is, at the best,
A drama, in which good and ill attest;
On comedy the curtain oft doth rise,
More often it is tragedy that lies
Behind the scenes — all do not read aright,
And lives are blighted that are in God's sight
Falsely accused!

The struggle, how severe, 'twixt right and wrong!
The night of trial, oh, how fierce and long!
Almost the floating banner did go down,

And yet, and yet, remembering the crown
"To him that overcometh," grace was sought
And honor saved. O soul, I pray, faint not—
Falsely accused!

Not guilty! so the record reads above;
Not guilty! that great judgment day shall prove!
Then wait in patience while the years go by,
And pray for them who pierce thee thro'—aye,
aye,
Enough to know that God thy cause will plead,
And write upon thy brow that all may read—
Falsely accused!

THE HUMAN HEART.

If one could read the human heart,
What riddles he would read!
How great and perfect is her art,
How pitiful her need!

She doth not fail in sore distress,
But smiles thro' every ill;
Yet faints for want of one caress,
Love may withhold at will.

Oh, much I pity thee, poor heart,
So little thou dost ask,
Yet hast it not! Play on thy part —
The world sees not thy mask.

Love on, and ask naught in return;
Be true as heaven is true;
The altar whereon love doth burn
Is bathed with heaven's dew.

THERE IS NO DEATH.

THERE is no death! Oh, wondrous bliss,
We live fore'er and aye.
To those I love I 'll waft a kiss,
But never say good-by.

CONSOLATION.

Ofttimes I would be loved,
  Ofttimes would be caressed,
When friends have faithless proved,
  When sorrow is my guest.
Then come I unto Thee,
  Jesus, my lover Thou!
Then Thou dost give to me
  Thy kiss on lip and brow.

Ofttimes my weary feet
  Scarce bear me on my way;
I falter not,—'t is meet
  Ever to toil and pray.
But come I unto Thee,
  Jesus, Thou dearest, best
Friend of all friends to me;
  Jesus, Thy name is Rest.

Stricken with sin, and crushed
  Under the scourging rod,

Even my prayer is hushed!
  Dare I approach to God?
Oh, I come unto Thee,
  Jesus, my Saviour Thou!
Stand Thou 'twixt wrath and me,—
  God will not curse me now.

Oh, Thou wilt intercede
  There at God's throne for me,
Showing Thy wounds, to plead
  There at God's throne for me!
Jesus, dear Son of Man,
  We walk where Thou hast trod;
Thou 'lt guide thro' life's short span,
  Jesus, Thou Son of God!

PRECIOUS THINGS OF EARTH.

How PRECIOUS the created things
  Of earth, both great and small;
The soul of man, the bird that sings,
  And God's love over all.

YE WELCOME DREAMS.

Ye welcome dreams, ye friends of night,
Born in the far-off realms of light,
  Come hither now; canst thou not spy
  The dark of night 'twixt earth and sky?
Come, and my fancies weave aright,
And lend me visions fair and bright;
Oh, let no evil omen 'fright
  Thy soft approach; I pray, draw nigh,
    Ye welcome dreams.

In thine embrace, oh, what delight!
Ye bring me beauty, wealth and might,
  And love and wisdom from on high;
  I 'd bid thee stay, nor say good-by,
Yet morning dawns — good-night, good-night,
    Ye welcome dreams.

WHAT PEOPLE SAY.

WHAT matters it, friend, what people say?
The trial is great? Canst not endure?
What! hast not learned how to watch and pray?
Be still, and the Lord shall keep thee pure.

MY BABY.

Little dimpled, laughing baby,
  Eyes so blue and cheeks so fair!
I don't know, but I think maybe
  Angels listened to my prayer,
For they brought you as I 'd have you,
  With your tiny curly head,
Like a ball of gold. I love you,
  Oh, I love you, baby Ned.

Little baby, in your blue eyes
  Seems your father's look I see,
And I fancy that his true eyes
  Gaze upon us o'er death's sea.
I 'd be lonely, so, without you,
  Little baby. Ah, it seems
I am wandering! I got you
  Baby, baby, in my dreams.

In my dreams! 't is there I kissed you,—
  Only there! My empty arms

Tell the story; I have missed you
  And your wondrous baby charms,
From my life. O little baby,
  How I want you! Lo! there gleams
Joy in radiant hope that maybe
  You will come again in dreams.

TO MY FRIEND, MRS. WHITMAN.

I.

DEAR friend of mine, bereft, I own
I pen to thee these lines in tears,
And for thy spirit's peace, the throne
Of God I seek,—for lo! these years,
Thou hast not needed thus to weep;
Thou hast not been bereft as now
One slumbers in unwaking sleep
Who kissed thy lips, thy cheek, thy brow,

And called thee in thy springtime, "Wife,"
And bowed with thee before thy God;
Yea, blessed with thee each tiny life
That came as on thro' life you 've trod.
On him it has been thine to lean,
Together you have wept; God knows
Thy sorrow, and He stands unseen
To comfort thee in all thy throes.

II.

In Heaven one has waited long,
The coming of beloved feet.
Methinks, all lonely in the throng
Of angels at God's throne, 't was sweet
To see the pearly gates swing wide,
And father enter Heaven's rest.
One moment she was at his side,
The next was folded to his breast.

And then she cried: "Will mother come
Ere long? I do so long to see
My mother in our heavenly home;
How lone and sad her heart must be!

But she is coming soon. Now tell
Of all my dear ones — Clarence, Mae,
And Lena: do they promise well;
Oh, tell me, do they come this way?"

Methinks he says, "'T is well!" and then
She gently leads her father where
That mansion doth await thee, when
All have been gathered home; one chair

Doth this inscription bear: "For wife,
And mother." It is empty now,
And on it hangs the "crown of life"
Which soon, sad heart, shall deck thy brow.

ENVOY.

Oh, weep thou not! God giveth rest!
Thy dear one hath but passed before;
Thou shalt be gathered to his breast,
In heaven — as in days of yore.

OH, TO BE LOVED.

Oh, to be loved! This hungry heart
  Is starving; naught can satisfy!
Love given answers but in part
  To all its bitter, pleading cry.

As I can love, I would be loved!
  Alas! I ask too much of fate;
But something whispers to my soul,
  "In patience bide a while, and wait.

"The clouds will some day roll away;
  Thy prayers' fulfillment, not at once,
But by-and-by, shall come to thee,
  And thou shalt know love's sweet response."

MY LITTLE WORLD.

One little world is all my own, I ween,
And here a king upon his throne am I;
My kingdom none may take by force, nor buy,
Nor yet inherit; and this realm unseen
By other eyes than mine, is where my queen
Reigns daily. Oh, my kingdom is her eye,
My throne her heart, my little world her high
Exalted love. Ah, gentle heart, Irene,
I seek not other worlds to conquer! Be
Thy love my refuge from the sin and strife
All 'round about me in life's busy mart.
And knowing that thou prayest oft for me,
Aye, whether light or dark my path thro' life,
A king I 'll be; my little world, thy heart.

INTERCEDING.

[The following lines were suggested by the rescue of a beautiful woman at one of the city missions.]

As FAIR to look upon as day;
  As dark her soul as darkest night!
As gentle as the twilight's ray,
  But lost and vile in God's pure sight;
Just one of those who lose their way
  In sin and error! "Oh, my God,
She ne'er had learned to Thee to pray;
  Then gently ply Thy chastening rod.

"Oh, had she learned to know Thy voice
  Before sin lured her, had her hand
Been placed in Thine, she had made choice
  Of Heaven's ways; had learned to stand!
So weak this faltering one! I plead
  Thy condemnation turn away;
O Father, seest Thou her need?
  Look on her — pity her, I pray.

"And I will bring her to Thy feet,
All broken, penitent, contrite,
I'll wash her in my blood! 'T is meet
To make this sin-stained soul pure, white,
And spotless. Father, give her me,
And I will cleanse her from all stain;
Present her faultless unto Thee!
For this, dear Father, I was slain."

LOVE'S MESSAGE.

I WALKED in the garden,
  Amid the bright flowers,
And rested me often
  In cool, shady bowers.
Alone, but not lonely!
  The birds flitted near,
And sang to my heart in
  Their sweet notes of cheer.

The soft breezes kissed me;
  The rose on my breast
Exhaled its sweet perfume,
  And to it confessed
My heart all its longings
  To be as the rose,
Content with my mission,
  Like it, find repose

On some loving bosom,
  Some dear life to bless,

With touch like the rose's
  Perfume and caress.
A little bird tripped o'er
  The grass at my feet,
And warbled a message:
  "Oh, life is so sweet!"

I sat idly dreaming,
  When near me a voice
Which awed me, yet thrilled me
  And made me rejoice,
Spoke low in soft accents:
  "In nature I prove,
Dear child of my bosom.
  My infinite love."

IF I SHOULD LOSE THY LOVE.

If I should lose thy love,
Heart of my heart,
Would I find peace above,
From thee apart?

Would all the rapture of
Infinite bliss
Equal one moment the
Joy of thy kiss?

Oh, would the wonderful
Lights in the skies
Shine like the love-light I
See in your eyes?

Earth holds but one I deem
Worthy all praise;
Of one alone I dream,
Thro' the glad days.

God! how I love you, dear!
I will be true,
Faithful till death us part,
My heart to you.

If I should lose your love,
Oh, could it be,
I should find peace in all
Eternity?

MY BROTHER.

Such gentleness was in his voice,
  Such fervency was in his prayer,
Each looked to God and did rejoice
  For sunbeams scattered everywhere.
We ne'er had met till in that hour
  When each bowed at the mercy-seat,
And God gave, in a wondrous shower,
  His grace to make our joy complete.

Each brought an offering to Him,
  A soul from sin and death redeemed;
Each saw, as in a vision dim,
  The other; for to both it seemed
The Father's face so dazed our sight,
  His smile so much enraptured us,
We said, oh, precious this delight;
  Oh, could we evermore be thus!

But by-and-by we rose to go
  Our different walks in life again,

And we must say good-by; but lo!
To part is near akin to pain.
Each murmured softly, "I will pray
For you." The world said, "Just a friend;"
"My brother," cried my heart alway,
For at God's throne our spirits blend.

THE OUTCAST.

SHE was an outcast, pale and wan,
Half-frozen in the winter's cold.
Of friends she had not even one.
Her raiment had for food been sold,
'Til she had scarce a covering
To shield her from the wintry blast,
While well-clad persons shivering
Sped quickly on and by her passed.

She wandered aimlessly about,
For each and every door to her
Was tightly closed and barred. In doubt
She wondered if her parents were
Still living; if the childhood home
Looked as it did that sin-curs'd night
When she went out from it to roam
A worse than leper in God's sight.

She could not know; but she was faint
And hungry, having eaten naught

For many days; yet no complaint
She uttered to a soul. High-wrought
And sensitive she was, although
In all the catalogue of crime
Was not one sin she did not know;
And yet her soul lived in a clime

Where beggars are unknown. So, proud,
Tho' sinful, hungry, naked, cold,
She wandered thro' the heedless crowd,
And whither bound could not have told.
'T was past the hour of ten at night.
Unwittingly she stood within
The entry of a church; the sight
Of warmth caused her to enter in.

A radiance from God's throne seemed o'er
The listening crowd to fall; and she
Crept just inside the inner door
Where she could happy faces see,
And not herself be seen. She heard
The message, little heeding it,
For childhood memories had been stirred
And thro' her half-dazed mind would flit.

At length the speaker finished. Then
The choir began to softly sing.
Her thoughts flew o'er the years to when,
As happy as the birds in spring,
She listened to those old refrains:
"There is a fountain filled with blood,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains."

Hushed were the voices now; she crept
A little farther out of sight,
Then knelt alone with God, and wept
As only those can weep whose right
To penitence she had; but sin
Had so bewildered her poor eyes,
The fountain she feared to plunge in,
For 't seemed that God must her despise.

Hark! 't is the voice of song again:
"There is a gate that stands ajar."
Her thoughts flew back to childhood, when
That little wicket-gate afar
Stood open; how her father ran
To fold her to his loving breast.

Oh, now she saw him, poor old man,
Bereft by her of peace and rest.

The little gate had ne'er been closed,
Nor had her father's door, but she
Knew not; she felt she 'd be refused
An entrance to her home. "For me,"
She simply said, "their love is dead;
I 've forfeited my right to home;
Disgrace and shame on father's head
I 've brought, and he 'd not bid me come."

But yonder parents wept and prayed,
And watched for her by day and night,
And to the gate they often strayed
To look, when tears were blinding sight.
The choir sang on: "The gate ajar,
The gate that stands ajar for me."
She listened. "Yes, the sweet words are,
'For me, that stands ajar for me!' "

Then all was still; she crept out when
The benediction was begun,
But in her soul one great Amen
Re-echoed. Ah, she saw God's Son

With open arms in pity stand,
And beckon her. "O God, how great
Thy love!" she cried; "take, take my hand,
And lead me thro' that open gate."

'T was midnight of a week gone by;
The childhood home was, oh, so still.
Here she had come, at last, to die.
She tried the door, she entered, fell
In darkness to the floor; 't was heard,
The fall, and watchful parents came
To learn the cause,— spoke not a word,
Save o'er and o'er again her name.

The darkness quivered into light,
The father held her to his breast.
Death-dews were on her brow so white,
As she her penitence confessed.
Then suddenly she raised her head:
"Oh, father, mother, can you see,
Oh, can you see," she smiling said,
"That gate that stands ajar for me?
'For me,— for me,
That stands — ajar — for — me.' "

GOD PROTECT MY LITTLE SWEETHEART.

"God protect my little sweetheart!"
Said an old man, bent and gray,
As he knelt beside a cradle,
Where a wee child sleeping lay.
In another room the mother
Of the child lay cold in death,
But she gave her babe to "papa,"—
Murmured with her latest breath:

"Take my child, O precious father,
She shall be your own; I give
With my babe to you my blessing;
Teach her how aright to live.
Mother waits for me in heaven,
Husband beckons from yon shore.
Now I 'm going; bring my baby,—
Where we 'll meet to part no more."

In the stillness of that chamber,
In the presence of the dead,

He had sworn to guide that wee one,
Where God's shining angels tread.
"God protect the little sweetheart!"
Murmured he above the head
Of its mother, sleeping sweetly,
In the dreamland of the dead.

So he watched beside the wee one,
And he murmured, soft and low,
As the little one lay swinging
In her cradle to and fro:
"All that's left me, laughing baby,
Is just you, and you shall be
Grandpa's sweetheart; he will make a
Gallant lover, you shall see."

Quickly fly the years! and dearer
To the old man's heart each day
She has grown, who is his sweetheart,
Beautiful and queenly May.
Twenty years he has been faithful,
Twenty years has sung this song:
"God protect my little sweetheart,
From all sorrow, pain and wrong."

But she now is someone's sweetheart,
  Who beseeches the old man
For his child, that he may wed her;
  And he feebly says, "You can."
Then he strolls off into shadow,
  There to weep! for blind and old,
He has found the heat of summer,
  Quickly changed to winter's cold.

There they found him, in the darkness
  With the fever on his brow.
"He is old!" the people whisper,
  "With old age is dying now!"
And he lies and gazes upward,
  Some prayer seeming unconfessed,
"God—protect—my—little—sweetheart!"
  This he cried, then sank to rest.

SHUN THE EVIL PATH.

Come here, my son, and let me speak.
You know not I am dying,
But you must hasten, I am weak;
Hush, dear one, cease your crying.
I love you so, and could you know
How I am pained to leave you,
You 'd heed the words I 'll say, for oh,
I suffer, love, to grieve you.

Last night they brought you home to me,
Unconscious from your drinking:
It was the last night we shall see
Together. I am sinking,
And ere you are yourself again,
Yes, ere you 're quite recovered,
Your mother will be gone; in pain
You 'll find our lives are severed.

Alone we two have lived for years.
You 've ofttimes gently spoken,